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PREFACE.

On reviewing what has been published during the past year in the pages of 'The Zoologist,' it is sad to notice how many fellow-workers and contributors to this journal have been removed by the hand of death. Taking them in the order in which their decease occurred, we have lost from amongst us Mr. E. T. Booth, whose famous museum at Brighton forms the subject of a notice in the present number; Mr. John Henry Gurney, of Northrepps, Norfolk, the great authority on raptorial birds from every quarter of the globe; Mr. W. S. Dallas, the Assistant Secretary of the Geological Society, and *quondam* Editor of the 'Popular Science Review'; Professor William Kitchen Parker, one of the ablest anatomists and physiologists of the day; Mr. Cecil Smith, of Bishop's Lydeard, near Taunton, author of the 'Birds of Somersetshire'; and, quite recently, Mr. John Hancock, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, a well-known ornithologist and skilled taxidermist, of whom, in the present number, our readers will find a biographical memoir. Each has left his mark in his own particular line of research, and the nature and extent of the contributions of each to zoological science may be estimated from the obituary notices which have appeared in this journal during the past twelve months.

Amongst the many interesting and useful articles which have been published in 'The Zoologist' since the 1st January last, special mention may be made of Mr. W. Eagle Clarke's account of the Birds of Jan Mayen Island; Col. Feilden's contribution on the Mammals of Barbados; the reports of Messrs. Southwell and A. H. Cocks on the Seal and Whale Fisheries; Mr. Ussher's description of the breeding of the Crossbill in Ireland, Mr. Cordeaux's account of the former haunts of the Ruff and Reeve in Lincolnshire, Mr. Gurney's

papers on the Pine Grosbeak, and Crested Tit, and Mr. Witchell's ingenious papers on the Evolution of Bird-song (pp. 233—246, and 283—288). Mr. Christy's Catalogue of local lists of British Birds, which appeared in the number for July last, will be of great utility to all students of the British *Ornis*, and we are glad to learn that the author contemplates its republication with some important additions.

An unusual number of ornithological works have appeared during the past year. Commencing in January last with the Crown Prince Rudolph's book, we have received and noticed the following County Avifaunas:—Aplin's Oxfordshire, Muirhead's Berwickshire, Browne's Leicestershire, and Christy's Essex; and have in hand for review the third volume of Stevenson's 'Birds of Norfolk,' edited by Mr. Southwell, and Graham's 'Birds of Iona and Mull.' In regard to exotic zoology, another volume of Blanford's 'Fauna of British India' has made its appearance; Backhouse's 'European Birds'; and Seebohm's 'Birds of Japan' (which we have still to notice); while attention has been already directed to another volume by Mr. Seebohm on the 'Classification of Birds,' and to Mr. Waterhouse's useful 'Index Generum Avium.'

The careful out-of-door observations which continue to be forwarded to us by many country contributors furnish a subject for congratulation, and lead us to hope for a continuance of such communications. Amongst the species observed for the first time in Great Britain during the past year may be noted *Ardea virescens* (pp. 105, 181), *Ægialitis asiatica* (p. 311), *Œstrelata torquata* (p. 454), and *Icterus baltimore* (p. 457), while in Ireland Mr. A. G. More has noticed the first occurrence of the Barred Warbler, *Sylvia nisoria* (p. 310). It is to be hoped that the Committee of Irish ornithologists, whose good intentions were announced in 'The Zoologist' for April last (p. 145), will receive that cordial support and assistance which alone will enable them to carry out the scheme they have in view.

On our own behalf, we would beg of our readers to make known 'The Zoologist' to their friends, and invite them to give it their support. The field of Zoology is a large one, in which there can be hardly too many workers, and the utility of placing observed facts on record can scarcely be over estimated.

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